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the assault upon the engine house at Harper's Ferry there is no reason to believe the world would ever have heard of him.

Something *after* Harper's Ferry created the John Brown whose soul goes marching on—a fact in the strange history, not of recent discovery, but definitely announced more than a quarter of a century ago. That something was the heroic, self-sacrificing, transfiguring idealism, which emerged in the storm and stress of Charlestown. It had appeared before in letters, in speeches, and even in the discussions at Dutch Henry's Crossing. This idealism Mr. Wilson finds to be only the mask of a successful hypocrisy and his misinterpretation is the capital and fatal defect of an aggressive and vigorously phrased book. Theories of insincerity—a trait which friends in Massachusetts and enemies in Virginia, with ample opportunities for observation, failed to detect—will not do. A more tenable conclusion, and one which the lapse of time seems to confirm, is that he was “the victim of mental delusions”.

LEVERETT W. SPRING.

The Life of Robert Toombs. By ULRICH BONNELL PHILLIPS, Ph.D., Professor of American History, University of Michigan. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1913. Pp. ix, 281.)

PROFESSOR PHILLIPS'S mastery of the field of Georgia politics needs no reassertion. It is on that basis reinforced by an extensive search for Toombs manuscripts that this work has been reared. Needless to say it is painstaking and detailed. Granted what he has set out to do, few objections are in point; such as are, involve questions of treatment. For example, it is doubtful whether at times there is not too much political detail. You cannot always see the wood for the trees. And yet it is on just this side that the book is strongest. A comparison with the earlier life of Toombs by Stovall emphasizes the superiority of Professor Phillips both in exact knowledge and in skillful delineation of political transitions. An excellent illustration is the way in which it is made plain how Toombs, a typical Southern Whig, was driven, in the Compromise of 1850, through the sheer logic of circumstance, almost to a face-about from his original position. But even in this admirable chapter we could afford to have fewer statistics of Congressional balloting and more of luminous presentment of the central figure. In some later episodes Toombs almost disappears—engulfed, one might say—in the general history of politics. The three great Congressional battles in which Toombs figured previous to 1860—the election of a speaker by the Thirty-First Congress, the Compromise of 1850, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise—are traced through the intricacies of parliamentary war with enthusiastic patience. Whether they justify all of Professor Phillips's conclusions is another matter. When he says of the Compromise of 1850 that if Toombs “had followed the opposite course at any stage, the adjustment would almost certainly have been defeated”, he assigns to Toombs a pre-eminence which some of us

cannot justify even from Professor Phillips's own statement of the case. In his searching examination of Georgia politics following the compromise, Professor Phillips shows his full strength as a political historian and makes an important contribution to the history of the "Constitutional Union" movement. He assigns the control of the movement to a triumvirate of Toombs, Stephens, and Cobb. Yet he allows them to remain shadowy background figures while the foreground is filled with the detail of politics; and he does not make plain the share of influence each exerted. In this episode, as here presented, Toombs may be likened to an actor in the flies who periodically comes on, pronounces a great speech, and retires. But is that actual politics? Somewhat similar is the rôle given Toombs in another episode still more important and like the foregoing admirably handled from the point of view of the whole. This is the merger of the Southern Whigs in the Democracy. Its inevitability, the stages of the event, are made convincingly clear. But what of Toombs—not the political unit but the human being? His internal drama, the transformation within his consciousness, is left largely to inference. A third instance in which the individual is sunk—or nearly sunk—in a stream of tendency is the secession movement of the winter of 1860–1861. Again Professor Phillips's grasp of the general movement excites one's envy. Toombs, however—his changes of tone, his apparent inconsistencies—remains incidental. Here the unsolved biographical problem is: what were Toombs's plans when he came to Washington in the autumn of 1860? Did he come armed with an alternative—guarantees for Southern rights, if possible; secession, if necessary? Did he come with his mind made up to force secession through? Was he at sea? Any of these explanations is conceivably the true one. But which? Professor Phillips appears to incline to the second though he does not commit himself and expends his strength on the general drama centring about the committee of thirteen. Still another vexed question Professor Phillips leaves where he finds it. He has no solution for the mystery of the Confederate presidential choice at Montgomery. Unlike Professor Dodd he does not accept the tradition that Toombs for a time was agreed upon for president and that the election of Davis represented a sudden and as yet inexplicable recombination of factions; but he cautiously refuses to support any other theory.

The unillustrious Confederate career of Toombs, overshadowed as he was by Davis—"the unapproachable martinet", in Professor Phillips's phrase—is adequately sketched; as are his pathetic later days.

There remains one general objection to the book which Professor Phillips would meet by pointing to his preface in which he frankly states that he is not primarily interested in biography. But if so, why call his book *The Life of Robert Toombs*? This close study of a political stream of tendency—able and valuable as it is—lacks after all the real presentment of a personality. Though many extracts from Toombs's speeches are given, these serve in the main as bits of the mosaic of politics rather

than as touches of portraiture. It is the portrait quality—a rare thing, to be sure!—that is absent from this admirable political monograph. And after all it is portraiture with regard to Toombs that we want. Outside the Georgia entanglement it is not yet proved that he is essential to the understanding of the political conflicts of 1845–1860. The opportunity before the biographer of Toombs is to make plain how it was that a politician as high-minded as Toombs was driven to regard those conflicts as he did. To-day, when such writers as Professor Dodd are seeking to revolutionize our view of the whole Confederate movement, when one set of conventional appreciations are passing and a new set are threatening to precipitate themselves, what we want above all is a convincing clew to the inner consciousness of the Southern leaders. Do the theories applied by Professor Dodd to Calhoun and Davis—the monopolistic theories, so to speak—find additional support in the life of Toombs, or, when that life is fully analyzed and translated into modern terms, do they begin to find in it their refutation? It is in answering such questions that the biographer of Toombs can serve his generation. Let us hope that Professor Phillips after so admirably clearing the ground intends eventually to attack the subtler problem.

N. W. STEPHENSON.

History of the United States of America under the Constitution.

By JAMES SCHOULER. Volume VII. *History of the Reconstruction Period, 1865–1877*. (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company. 1913. Pp. xvi, 398.)

THIS book marks the completion of a task begun many years ago “without fear or favor”, the first result of which was a volume published in 1880. Twice since then—in 1891 when the fifth volume appeared, which brought the narrative to Lincoln’s inauguration, and again in 1899 with a sixth volume on the epoch of Civil War—the author believed that his contribution to United States history was finished. But the temptation aroused by the accessibility of the Johnson manuscripts in the Library of Congress, and especially by the publication of Gideon Welles’s *Diary* could not be resisted, for, as Mr. Schouler says, “borne onward by some invisible current”, he felt forced to aid in vindicating Johnson’s memory. So far as it is concerned with Johnson’s presidency, the present book is based upon articles by the author (hitherto printed) and upon lectures delivered by him at Johns Hopkins and Harvard universities. Familiar with the circumstances and incidents of President Grant’s two terms, Mr. Schouler was still further moved to draw on his personal recollections and, in particular, on Mr. Rhodes’s account of the period, for the sake of bringing the narrative to the opening of the Hayes administration. The whole book is a well-balanced story of twelve momentous years.

That portion of the book devoted to Johnson’s administration is distinctly the more carefully studied and matured. With sufficient regard